

Carter Defends Suing ex-CIA Man

President Carter said yesterday his proposed reform of the federal bureaucracy would protect legitimate "whistle blowers" but he defended the decision to sue a former CIA employee whose book criticized the agency's withdrawal from Vietnam.

A "whistle blower" is a government employee who brings to public attention cases of administrative mismanagement and inefficiency.

Responding to questions at a White House news conference following announcement of his Civil Service reform proposals, Carter said he would create an Office of Special Counsel that would "protect, through the courts if necessary, those who are legitimate whistle blowers."

But he said he disagreed that former CIA employee Frank Snepp, whose book "Decent Interval" told of alleged CIA shortcomings during the hectic American evacuation from Saigon, was a legitimate whistle blower.

"I don't look on Frank Snepp as one of the greatest whistle blowers of all times," Carter said.

He defended the government's decision to undertake a civil suit against Snepp for not clearing his book with the CIA because "he signed a contract" and later confirmed with the CIA director he would submit the book for clearance before publication.

*File
196*